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FM AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2614
DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
NSC WASHDC
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC
DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

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STATE FOR AF/EPS AND AF/E - MBEYZEROV
DOC FOR BECKY ERKUL - DESK OFFICER
STATE PLEASE PASS TO AUSTR FLORIE LISER AND BILL JACKSON
TREASURY FOR FRANCOIS BOYE

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: MADAGASCAR: LETTER TO POTUS ON AGOA

SUMMARY: On July 1, Post received a copy of a letter from the vice presidents of the Malagasy transition authority (HAT) addressed to President Obama. The letter, which urges the USG to renew AGOA benefits for Madagascar, is translated below. END SUMMARY.

HIGH TRANSITION AUTHORITY
PRESIDENCY
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENTS
Antananarivo, June 19, 2009.

HIS EXCELLENCY BARACK OBAMA
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON D.C.

Mr. President:

Over the last months, Madagascar has experienced in-depth social and political changes, and very often, people abroad do not understand the true value of the scope and historical dimensions of these changes.

Despite difficulties generated by obstructions and pressures, the current talks between the different political movements shall soon give birth to a road map geared towards the restoration of genuine and credible democracy after the transition period.

Excellency,
For Madagascar, one of the few countries still listed among the Least Developed Countries, fighting poverty is a basic priority, and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which provides the population with over one hundred thousand direct jobs in export processing zones, is among the most effective instruments at hand. Because of a sound structuring of this industrial opportunity in Madagascar, our country now ranks second in textile production, and it is expected that a noticeable improvement of the business climate, namely thanks to the creation of a competition-based business environment, would eventually generate better performances in all concerned industries.

The closing of this opportunity for Madagascar, scheduled for the end of this year, can cause but concern for the entire workforce, and consternation for the needy as well as those businesses that dared to put their trust in the future of a country they know to offer great promises.

For the purpose of showing our interest in keeping Madagascar's AGOA membership, we have set up a multidisciplinary technical commission gathering representatives of the administration and affected businesses, tasked with explaining the stakes of the said membership, and highlighting the relevance of the democratic process underway.

Excellency,
The Malagasy people, together with the Transition authorities, are committed to a process of which the ultimate outcome is the creation of a new constitutional order within a fourth Republic. Putting Madagascar back on track to strengthening the rule of the

law, good governance and democracy is a true political will.

Yours respectfully,

The Vice-Presidents of the High Transition Authority

Dolin RASOLOSOA
Jean LAHINIRIKO
Hary Naivo RASAMOELINA
Bruno RAJAONSON
Daniel RAMAROMISA
Thodore RANJIVASON
Patrick MONIBOU

MARQUARDT